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PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

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Korean Presbyterians Move to Heal Rift

(Seoul) - Representatives of two divided factions within the Presbyterian Church in Korea have agreed to reunite.

A statement issued by peace negotiators for the groups, which split at the church's General Assembly last September, says "we hereby decide to unify the divided General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Korea".

Further meetings have been fixed to work out details. The negotiators were called together with help from missionaries of churches that join in the Korean church's work; the United Presbyterian Church in the USA, the Presbyterian Church in the US (Southern) and the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

Two representatives of the mission board, Presbyterian Church US - Dr. S. Hugh Bradley, Far East field secretary and Dr. L. Nelson Bell, attended the sessions with the negotiators. The joint statement was drawn up by two spokesmen from each side in the dispute.

For the majority group, which favours continuing membership in the World Council of Churches and links with the United Presbyterian Church in the USA, the signers were Dr. Kyung Chik Han of Seoul and the Rev. Ho Joon Yun, general secretary of the National Christian Council of Korea.

The minority spokesmen, for the group that broke away because of dislike of ecumenical trends, were the Rev. Song Kil Yi and the Rev. In Sik Yi, both former moderators of the church.

Reports from Korea say that the spokesmen for the minority group did not carry the support of the whole faction in their statement. EPS, Geneva

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US Methodists Advised to Retain Negro Jurisdiction

(Washington, D.C.) - The General Conference of The Methodist Church (US) has been advised to retain its present regional and jurisdictional structure, including the "Central Jurisdiction" for Negro churches.

A four-year study by a seventy-member fact-finding commission has recommended retaining the existing five jurisdictions and the all-Negro Central Jurisdiction. Each jurisdiction elects its own bishops and sends representatives to central boards and agencies of The Methodist Church.

The findings of the commission will be presented to the church's General Conference at its Denver, Colorado, meeting, April 27-May 11.

Asked by The Methodist Church to examine the problem of racial segregation, the commission reported that the existence of the Central Jurisdiction "assures racial integration in the highest echelons of our Church". They said The Methodist Church had the highest degree of racial integration in its governing bodies of any American denomination.

Opposing "drastic legislation" as a means of solving the segregation problem, the report advocated "education and experimentation in the creating of a climate-spiritual and psychological - in which an inclusive Methodist Church will be a reality".

The commission pointed out that local congregations can apply for transfer from one jurisdiction to another and advocated implementing this step. Other proposals for racial cooperation in the church include setting up interracial ministerial associations, more pulpit exchanges and establishment of committees on interracial brotherhood in the 100 annual conferences of the church.

The chairman of the commission was Mr. Charles C. Parlin, well-known New York lawyer.

Five hundred thousand Negroes are among the nearly ten million Methodists in the USA. EPS, Geneva

New Home for Refugees in Greece

(Kalamata, Greece) - Forty alien and handicapped refugees have been resettled in a new home in Kalamata, southern Greece, being operated under auspices of the World Council of Churches.

The home is the first major project of its kind in Greece which provides for the permanent resettlement of refugees. All forty of its occupants - Albanians, Bulgarians and Yugoslavs, who have come into Greece since the end of World War II - have been rejected for resettlement in other countries.

The WCC began negotiations to establish the home two years ago when the Metropolis of Kalamata offered to provide the land. Permission was received from Greek government authorities to establish the home and the United States Escapee Program and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees made the basic grants for the building and for maintenance. Additional aid was given by the World Council and by Swedish Inter-Church Aid, the British Council of Churches, Church World Service (US), CORSO (a New Zealand voluntary community agency for overseas relief), CARE, the Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (UK) and also by the Wings of Friendship agency.

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At the opening of the home, the Orthodox Bishop of Kalamata said that "the World Council of Churches deserves every credit and honour because, in cooperation with the United Nations, it represents the love of the churches by founding such beautiful homes".

During the past summer an ecumenical work camp in which 24 youth participated, also built a work project building, including a carpenter's room, rabbit house and chicken house, on the grounds of the home.

Work will be provided for the refugees living at the home either through church-related programmes or in agricultural projects in the area.

The home will be administered by a special Foundation established by Royal Decree, of which the Metropolitan of Messina is the president. Members include WCC and UNHCR representatives. EPS, Geneva

WCC Asks Continued WRY Support

(Geneva) - Member Churches of the World Council of Churches have been called upon to continue and to strengthen their support of World Refugee Year.

In an appeal issued approximately mid-way through the International Year, they have been asked particularly to help focus the attention of Christians upon the specific responsibilities carried by the churches in their world-wide service to refugees.

The appeal was issued following a review of church activities for World Refugee Year by the twelve-member Administrative Committee of the WCC's Division of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees, at its quarterly meeting in Geneva.

The Committee noted "with gratitude" that the organization's 172 member churches of the Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox confessions, have already contributed $700,000 to the support of special projects submitted to them by the Division for World Refugee Year.

However, it pointed out, additional support is required if the WCC is to fulfil its continuing responsibilities to tens of thousands of refugees who daily look to it for help.

Additionally, it said, this aid is required if it is to take advantage of the increased opportunities for cooperation with governmental and intergovernmental organizations for projects of resettlement, integration and welfare care. The appeal noted that governmental and intergovernmental agencies are to a large extent dependent upon voluntary agencies for the field work required to carry out their programmes.

One of the largest voluntary agencies in the field, the World Council is carrying a caseload of 60,000 refugees who require immediate help. During 1959 it helped resettle a total of 11,647 refugees from 25 countries in new homes in 38 countries. (In all a total 200,000 refugees have been resettled by the Division since the end of World War II.)

In addition the Division, which employees a refugee service field staff of over 500 persons in field offices in 46 countries, also provides extensive programmes for refugees still living in camps or in countries of first asylum. This includes direct material aid, pastoral care, recreation and kindergarten projects, vocational training and language classes, summer camps, medical aid and other help.

Thousands of refugees in this category continue to arrive daily, the appeal noted, and require the specific help of the churches.

"In such a service, especially to those for whom migration offers no possible solution to their problem, the hands of Christian fellowship and the ministries of the Church gain added meaning," it said.

The appeal asked member churches to give special attention to the list of projects submitted to the Division for WRY and also "to seek to ensure that an appropriate amount of the moneys raised by public appeal should be secured for the carrying out of specific church responsibilities". EPS, Geneva

Ecumenical Scholarships Awarded to 135 Students

(Geneva) - A group of 135 students from 31 countries are studying this year in colleges, universities and seminaries in 11 countries on World Council of Churches' ecumenical scholarships.

The group, one of the largest ever to participate in the programme, represents eighteen churches or confessions, and includes six refugee students - five from Hungary and one from Yugoslavia.

Now in its thirteenth year, the programme is designed to give a broader knowledge of the life of other churches in other countries to theological students, young pastors, religious education specialists and other youth preparing for work in the church.

In all more than 1,800 students have participated in the programme since it was started in 1947. The majority of the scholarships are given in the form of "free places", including both tuition and board, by the colleges and seminaries of member churches of the World Council.

Countries in which students are studying during this 1959-60 academic year are Canada, the USA, India, Britain, France, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Italy, Switzerland and Turkey. In Switzerland, schools at which students are studying include the WCC's Ecumenical Institute at Bossey.

The students come from Asia, Africa, the Middle East, the Far East, Latin America, Europe and North America. Countries represented are: Angola, the Cameroons, Madagascar, Rhodesia, Uganda, the Union of South Africa, Syria, Egypt, India, Ceylon, Hong Kong, Japan, the USA, Canada, Brazil, Austria, Belgium, Britain, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Yugoslavia.

Denominationally the students represent the Anglican, Baptist, Coptic, Greek Orthodox, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian and Reformed Churches and the Evangelical Union of South Africa, the United Church of Japan, the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa, the Re-Reformed Church of South Africa, the United Church of Rhodesia and the Belgian Christian Missionary Church. EPS, Geneva

Laurence Olivier Reads Prayer for Leprosy Sufferers

(Paris) - Sir Laurence Olivier, noted British actor, will read a prayer for sufferers from leprosy on radio and television on Sunday January 31 to mark the seventh annual world day commemorating their needs.

The prayer, written by Monsieur Raoul Follereau, is in the form of a poem and has been previously used in French by French actor Pierre Fresnay

M. Follereau, president of the Order of Charity in France, distributes a brochure internationally to enlist concern for the fifteen million leprosy sufferers in the world. EPS, Geneva

Pastors Arrested for Evangelising in Italy

(Rome) - Three Protestant ministers who tried to hold an open air meeting in the Italian city of Salerno in December were arrested and detained for two hours by police, who broke up the attempt.

Microphones, amplifiers and a car used as a platform were confiscated and a camera carried by one of the preachers was damaged.

The three arrested men were Mose Baldari, an Italian; V.J. Casale, who has been in the service of the Bible Christian Union in Italy for six years; and W. Fusco, a Baptist from the United States.

Pastor Casale said that the police had been alerted in advance about the meeting in accordance with the law and there had been no ban.

No explanations or apologies were given by the police. EPS, Geneva

German Church Leaders Declare Solidarity with Jews

(Bielefeld) - President Ernst Wilm of the Church of Westphalia has called for greater efforts to train children in Germany to show friendship toward the Jewish people.

In an interview with the Evangelical Press Service, the churchman, who was a leader in the church resistance to National Socialism, said he was distressed because minors had been guilty of anti-Semitic demonstrations.

"Who has sown seeds of hate toward our Jewish brothers in the heart of children and made them commit these criminal actions?" he asked. "Why are the monstrous atrocities our nation was able to inflict on the Jews concealed from our children in schools and homes."

President Wilm advocated encouraging a truly Christian approach to the Jews in local parish youth groups and church organisations.

"If we meet a Jew we Christians must be filled with love a hundred times as strong as usual", he declared. "If God in His mercy sends a Jew who survived terror across my path, he does it to make me love this one Jew for the sake of the millions of Jews who have been killed and to make me offer a very modest reparation for the wrong done to his brothers and sisters"

The Westphalian leader asked for increased support of the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation, to which he belongs.

In action taken after the outbreak of anti-Semitic incidents in Germany, Bishop Otto Dibelius of Berlin, president of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), wired "the deep alarm and horror" of German Protestant people to Israel's Prime Minister, David Ben Gurion. He offered Israel a sum of $25,000 to help Jewish immigrants. EPS, Geneva

In Brief

The British and Foreign Bible Society has announced a campaign to circulate a million more Gospels in Africa in 1960 in addition to its normal programme. Half a million will be printed in the United Kingdom in 39 African languages. The rest, in 15 other languages, will be printed in Africa. Churches, Christian councils and literature committees will be asked to cooperate in distribution at low selling prices. Eye-catching covers are being designed to help sell the Gospels.

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Yugoslav customs officials have released 800 parcels of Scriptures held for six months in customs. The consignment, sent by the British and Foreign Bible Society, includes 5,000 Bibles, 3,000 New Testaments and 14,000 Gospels, mostly in Serbian, Croatian, Czech, Slovenian and Rumanian. Distribution will be through the Bible Society's Belgrade depot.

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The Rev. A.E. Inbanathan has been appointed general secretary of the Bible Society of India and Ceylon from May 1960. He succeeds the late Mr. P. Mahanty, who died last November. Dr. Inbanathan, a Presbyter of the Church of South India, is a graduate of Bangalore and Serampore theological faculties and of Hartford Theological Seminary in the USA. He has been a chaplain at the Vellore Medical College and Hospital in South India and in 1959 was visiting William Paton Lecturer at Selly Oak, Birmingham. Dr. Inbanathan will work from Bangalore.

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An illustrated booklet, "Stories of Jesus for Children Everywhere", is being distributed in the Congo in twenty dialects in an edition of 240,000. The offset printing is a stage in a project to make the booklet available in fifty languages and dialects in various countries. The money came from gifts of children, especially in the USA and Canada, and is being administered by the World Council of Christian Education and Sunday School Association.

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A Roman Catholic lay missionary organisation called "Organisation Mondiale du Laicat Missionnaire" is training volunteers to serve abroad for a two-year period without pay. After selection, candidates are trained for two months before being sent to help in Roman Catholic missionary work.

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Dr. Arnold T. Ohrn, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance since 1948, has announced that he will retire from the post at the tenth Baptist World Congress to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, June 26-July 3, 1960. Dr. Joseph Nordenhaug of Norway, President of the international Baptist Theological Seminary at Ruschlikon-Zurich, Switzerland, has been nominated by the Alliance's executive committee to succeed Dr Ohrn.

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The Methodist Church in the USA launched an international "Decade of Prayer" on January 1 as the first step in a "Decade of Dynamic Discipleship" promoted by the church's General Board of Evangelism. Evangelist Dr. E. Stanley Jones spoke to a midnight prayer service at Knoxville, Tennessee, attended by 1,100 people from 23 American States. In addition to a world-wide stress on prayer for peace and Bible reading, the "Decade" will work for more vigorous evangelism, training in doctrine, starting of new churches and the recruiting of preachers and missionaries.

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The executive officers of the four largest Protestant churches in France are preparing a statement on ordination to the ministry for consideration by the churches' governing bodies in 1960 and 1961. The research is being done in response to the work of a Commission of Ecumenical Studies set up by all four churches: The Church of the Augsburg Confession, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of France, the Reformed Church of Alsace-Lorraine and the French Reformed Church.

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Pastor Marc Boegner, president of the French Protestant Federation, has become president of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences in Paris. Dr. Boegner, who is the first Christian minister to hold the position for 169 years, urged the admission of women to membership of the body.

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The Anglican, Roman Catholic, Methodist and Presbyterian churches in Malaya have protested to Prime Minister Tengku Abdul Rahman following a government ban on Sunday broadcasts of church worship.

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Pastor Olav Rørdam, an ex-minister of the Lutheran National Church of Denmark and a married man, has been given dispensation by Pope John XXIII to be ordained as a Catholic priest. Pastor Rørdam, who became a Roman Catholic in 1945, is the first married Roman Catholic priest in the country and will serve at the Church of St. Theresa in Copenhagen.

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Evangelist Billy Graham will visit West Germany to conduct a campaign in the autumn of 1960. In response to an invitation from the Evangelical Alliance, he will speak in Essen, Hamburg and Berlin in September. Nine preparatory committees in Germany will prepare and follow up the visit. EPS, Geneva